UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA * Case No. 20-CR-442(EK)

*

* Brooklyn, New York
* August 15, 2022

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BAIMADAJIE ANGWANG,

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Defendant.

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TRANSCRIPT OF CRIMINAL CAUSE FOR TELEPHONE CONFERENCE
BEFORE THE HONORABLE ERIC R. KOMITEE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

APPEARANCES:

V.

For the Government: MATTHEW HAGGANS, ESQ.

FRANCISCO NAVARRO, ESQ. MEREDITH ARFA, ESQ. SCOTT CLAFFEE, ESQ.

Asst. United States Attorney
United States Attorney's Office

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For the Defendant: JOHN F. CARMAN, ESQ.

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Fiore Reporting and Transcription Service, Inc. 4 Research Drive, Suite 402 Shelton, Connecticut 06484 (203)929-9992 (Proceedings commenced)

THE CLERK: This is criminal cause for a telephone conference, Docket No. 20-CR-442, USA v. Baimadajie Angwang.

Before asking the parties to state their appearance, I would like to note the following. Persons granted remote access to proceedings are reminded against the general prohibition against photographing, recording, and rebroadcasting the court proceedings.

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Would the parties please state their appearance, government first.

MR. HAGGANS: Good afternoon. For the United States it's Matthew Haggans, Francisco Navarro, Meredith Arfa, and Scott Calffee appearing by telephone.

THE COURT: Good afternoon.

MR. CARMAN: Good afternoon. Good afternoon, Your Honor, it's John Carman with the defendant, Angwang.

THE COURT: All right. Good afternoon, Mr. Carman, to you as well.

And (indiscernible), I apologize for referring to you as Aaron. My law clerk was going to be calling the case,

but we are happy and grateful to have you with us.

THE CLERK: You're welcome.

THE COURT: I called this case, obviously on very short notice for conference today because in putting together the unclassified CIPA Section 4 opinion that we issued on Friday, we mapped out essentially what we think the schedule would have to look like from here to trial in order for the currently scheduled trial date, which is September 12th, for jury selection to hold.

And as you can see from the final paragraphs in that order, it's a highly accelerated time table. And I don't know, and I'm not sure whether the parties yet are even in a position to know how much additional related process we will need between now and jury selection.

But the statute provides for substantial additional process in the event that the defense wants to use some or all of the substituted material that is in the process of being turned over to them now, pursuant until the order that I just issued.

And, you know, the bottom line at this stage is that if either party believes, or comes to believe that the schedule is not realistic, either party (indiscernible) the defense, (indiscernible) the fact that the defense will have had this evidence for substantially less time than the government has, it seems to me to be in everybody's interest

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        to surface that view as quickly as possible.
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                  It will help me manage my calendar where we've got
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        a bunch of, in some cases, overlapping in September, but more
        importantly will give visibility to the parties with respect
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        to the time line on which they're working to prepare for
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        trial.
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                  So with that why don't I just ask the government in
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        the first instance, to just give an update on what you see as
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        the schedule from here in terms of turning over the material
        that we've had (indiscernible) in the orders, and then I can
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        turn the floor over to the defense to talk about whether the
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        current schedule seems realistic to them now, seems
        unrealistic as of now, or whether it's simply not yet
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        possible for the defense to know that.
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                  So, Mr. Carman, why don't we start with you, or
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        your side?
                  MR. CARMAN: Your Honor, I think that in the letter
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        that was submitted by the government --
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                  THE COURT: Oh, sorry.
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                  MR. CARMAN: I'm sorry?
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                  THE COURT: Yeah. I meant to say Mr. Claffee.
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                  MR. CARMAN: Oh, I thought you said -- okay, never
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        mind.
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                  THE COURT: I did say Carman, but I meant -- I
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        meant to just ask the government first.
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5 1 MR. CARMAN: Certainly, Your Honor. 2 THE COURT: Because (indiscernible) some -- some 3 additional information from the government's side about when the CISO officer is available to make some of these 4 productions and related items. 5 MR. HAGGANS: Yes, I -- this is Matthew Haggans 6 7 speaking for the government, Your Honor, and I can give the 8 Court an update. 9 And I'll just note, Mr. Carman, I believe is aware of everything I'm about to say. 10 So we've filed two update letters. The second one 11 was on Friday night and PACER was down, so we didn't docket 12 it until this morning. 1.3 But I'll cut to the last paragraph, which is, we've 14 15 arranged for the CISO to collect the material first thing 16 Wednesday morning. It's my understanding he has scheduled a time with Mr. Carman, also Wednesday morning, so that he can 17 18 make the material available to counsel. 19 It's also my understanding that the CISO has 20 completed all of the shall we say necessary steps so that Mr. 21 Carman can actually have them without too much further delay 22 once the two of them are able to meet. 23 So from the Government's perspective, that aspect

of the Court's directive from its order in the CIPA 4 will be completed on Wednesday.

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From that point forward, if the defense chooses to make use of the CIPA 5 process, you know, the government doesn't have a prediction, of course, at this time, as to whether the defense is going to pursue that.

THE COURT: Okay. All right. So, Mr. Carman, you're on mute at this point.

MR. CARMAN: Yeah, I was -- I was on mute, but you were -- you were breaking up. I really didn't hear what you said, so I'm sure you're looking for my position on this.

THE COURT: Yeah, on your position with respect to the schedule and whether you think the trial date is likely to hold at this point, unlikely to hold, whether you think it makes sense to keep the pre-trial conference we have on the calendar Friday on the calendar, or to move it and any other observation you may (indiscernible).

MR. CARMAN: Your Honor, I'm in substantially the same position I've been in throughout the entire process. I think that that status is about to change on Wednesday, but until I have an opportunity to meet with the CISO and to review the material, I don't feel like I'm in a position to make any prediction, you know, as to the trial schedule, whether you know, my review will necessitate a delay, whether it's short or long. I just -- I don't think I'll know until Wednesday.

So it makes sense to me to keep the conference on

Friday, or even have another one on Thursday if you want.

You know, I should have a better sense of whether I need some additional time, or whether I don't, having had a chance to review it, but you know I'm -- I just -- I don't have any sense of what I'm about to see.

THE COURT: Right. So I think I can say, without risking any classification issues, that the material that's coming your way is not tremendously voluminous, I don't think.

And so, I don't expect it will take you a ton of time to review and digest it, but I also don't think I'm revealing anything beyond the scope of my unclassified (indiscernible) say that, you know, if there are substituted materials coming your way, it's the case under the statute.

Those are coming your way because there were indications that the material was helpful -- material were helpful to the defense, and so I would expect -- and you know, the government will just stop me if I'm getting ahead of myself here, but I would expect that, you know, material that is helpful to the defense, material almost by definition that the defense will want to use, and if that will require additional CIPA 5 -- the CIPA Section 5 process then, you know, maybe the government has a view at this point on whether (indiscernible) assuming there's a CIPA Section 5 process to come, whether that's realistic on the current time

table or not realistic.

MR. HAGGANS: Your Honor, it's Matthew Haggans again.

It's difficult for the government to sort of evaluate the defense's view. And I think we would have to do that in order to come to some informed view as to whether the current schedule is achievable.

You know, off the cuff, I believe I tend to agree with Mr. Carman that we have a -- we have a conference on the blocks already for this coming Friday, and certainly by then the defense will have had the opportunity to evaluate the material and I expect come to at least a preliminary view, if not a considered view, of what, if anything, they intend to do.

I would just note, at that -- at that conference, it's currently scheduled as a, you know, a regular in-person court proceeding without any, you know, classified component. Not necessarily that we would need it to address the schedule, but I'm just noting that for the record.

THE COURT: Yeah. But answer the hypothetical for me if you can, Mr. Haggans. If you assume that the response from the defense is either of the following, either having seen the material that's in the process of being delivered to them, yet it is the defense's intention to use some of that material at trial, or even a more modified version of that

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response along the lines of we can't, as the defense, rule out now the likelihood that we will want to use this material at trial, especially given the difficulties that defense counsel will have in the meantime at least, conversing with his own client about this stuff.

If those are the responses, or one or both of those are the responses, what happens next from the government's perspective and on what rough time table would the government anticipate that happening?

MR. HAGGANS: So in either scenario, Your Honor, the defense counsel would be preparing whatever it is they might be seeking to file.

It's our understanding that they would need to do that with the assistance of the CISO in the -- you know, the appropriate space within the courthouse. Obviously, he could not be preparing it from home, or you know, on his laptop or anything like that, without -- without knowing --

THE COURT: Why? Why (indiscernible) prepare a one-sentence letter that says, we can use everything that's just been turned over to us, full stop? That letter would not be classified.

MR. HAGGANS: I agree, Your Honor. A cover letter providing notice of the motion would not be classified, but in my limited experience at the CIPA 5 and CIPA 6 stages, they will typically try to articulate what it is that they're

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-- what it is is their theory, and I think in this scenario, that would need to happen in the -- in the classified setting.

THE COURT: Why -- just elucidate the reason for that a little bit. Like, why (indiscernible) say something about their theory?

I mean, you -- you know, as appears in the unclassified order, the only reason we're getting to get where we're at now is because, you know, there's been some realization that at least some of the material that we had to run through the CIPA Section 4 process is helpful and material.

And so, if everybody agrees with it, why do they need -- like, what is the CIPA 5 -- Section 5 motion in this case look like, as best you can anticipate?

MR. HAGGANS: It requires a particularized statement that sets out with specificity the classified information that counsel reasonably believes is necessary, and --

THE COURT: All right.

MR. HAGGANS: -- under the text of the statute, Section 5A, that notice shall include a brief description of the classified information.

I can't envision in the -- in any case in general, and certainly in the circumstance of this case in particular,

Your Honor, how the defense could complete that submission without providing a filing that is in a sealed and classified setting, and I would note in the cases in which I -- that I have litigated that have involved filings under Section 5, they occur in the sealed and classified setting as a matter of course.

THE COURT: Okay. All right.

So that's helpful, and I guess for purposes of this conversation, we should all be assuming that the defense will need to prepare a CIPA Section 5 motion, and that that will be somewhat logistically complex in that Mr. Carman will need to be working with the classified information security officer to, you know, have access to a secure laptop, or whatever it's going to be in the courthouse, so that he can work with classified material accordingly.

But assume that that's going to happen, and assume that in substance, the classified file you get says we want to use either a lot of or all of the material that we received through the Section 4, what happens next?

MR. HAGGANS: We would then -- this is the government, Your Honor -- would then be preparing our opposition, or response under Section 6 in which we'd be -- I don't want to predict the future, because I don't know what the defense might be articulating, but we would then be seeking a hearing to address that information.

THE COURT: Okay. And the remedy, or other relief that you're seeking at that hearing consists of what? An application to preclude the defense from using that information? An application to seal the courtroom?

MR. HAGGANS: I will (indiscernible).

THE COURT: What can you tell me at this stage?

MR. HAGGANS: So with -- I would prefer not to get into specifics in that that might communicate something about the underlying information, Your Honor, but the Court is correct.

One possible request the government could make would be to essentially deny the defendant the authorization to use that material.

THE COURT: Okay. But all this -- so today is August 15th, and jury selection is set for September 12th, and I could be missing something.

I could be missing something glaring when I tell you what my working assumptions are as to where we stand now, but it just seems to me logical to say that if there's material -- if, you know, documents or other evidence as to which the Court and the government are agreed, you know, that needs to be regarded for (indiscernible) the defense, then almost by definition, one would expect the defense to say, look, we (indiscernible) use this material.

And so, whatever happens next in this

(indiscernible) process, I question (indiscernible) happen realistically.

Is there any scenario from the government's perspective in which the process that (indiscernible) can do so, can be worked through effectively on the current time line? Again, we assume that the defense is going to say something other than, oh no, I don't need any of it.

MR. HAGGANS: The government believes the answer is yes, it remains possible, Your Honor, insofar as -- and in particular because the Court is already familiar with the material.

This is not a case in which, for example, the -- as happens in some cases, the defendant is a clear defense contractor and is charged with sharing information unauthorized and the defendant is seeking to use information in their own head.

THE COURT: Right.

MR. HAGGANS: This is not that type of case. The Court is already familiar with the information, and so we don't have that necessity for a spin up on a new topic from the Court's perspective.

THE COURT: Right. Okay. But -- yeah, there are two -- there's two -- two big unknowns at this point, which are one, what's the defense response going to be when they (indiscernible) the material in question. I think we can

guess with a high degree of confidence what that will be, which is yes, we'd like to use at least some of this stuff, or at least we can't rule out the possibility.

I think the bigger unknown at this point is, what will the government's response to that indication be, and so — so the government makes a very good point that the answer to that question can't really be provided this week with the hearing scheduled the way it is. Right? Because — because we're going to be in open court on Friday, and so what?

Like, is there -- Thursday afternoon would be better for me for a variety of reasons than Friday morning, and I guess one question is -- and I'm glad we have Mr.

Rucker on the phone for this question, but I put it to the government lawyers in the first instance.

Would it be possible to convert Friday's pre-trial conference, which seems premature to me, into a discussion of these Section 5 issues, and to do that in a secure and sealed setting with both parties present, government and defense?

Mr. (indiscernible).

MR. HAGGANS: Yeah, this is Matt Haggans speaking.

THE COURT: Sound workable to you?

MR. HAGGANS: This is Matt Haggans speaking, Your Honor. Subject to the CISO schedule and the Court's schedule, government will of course make itself available for such a conference.

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                  I just note I -- the Court said the parties. I
        think it would be counsel, but based on the Court's existing
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        order --
                  THE COURT: Yes. Yes.
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                  MR. HAGGANS: -- the defendant would not be
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        present.
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                  THE COURT: Correct. Thank you for the
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        clarification. When I -- yeah, I spoke generally that way.
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        I just meant to say that both sides would be represented, but
        I agree. Then if we're going to be discussing classified
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        material. that the status quo right now would indicate that
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        lawyers and cleared court reporter only, and not the
        defendant himself.
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                  Mr. Carman, what do you think about that proposal?
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        You had (indiscernible) on Thursday in your earlier remarks.
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                  MR. CARMAN: I'm available Thursday afternoon, Your
        Honor.
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                  THE COURT: Okay. All right. So let's -- let's do
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        that, then.
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                  Let's plan to gather at, I'm going to say 3:00 this
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        Thursday, August 18th for the purposes we have talked about
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        here and, you know, if the government can go through that,
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        that mental exercise that I've kind of posited here today,
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        which is assume the defense comes back and says we intends to
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put some or all of this material into evidence, or at least

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we can't rule out that possibility, then we'll hear from the government on the subject of where we go from there in their view.

MR. HAGGANS: Understood, Your Honor, and in that type of setting it will be a little easier for the government to respond with particularity than it is on this platform.

Thank you.

THE COURT: Yeah. Totally understand. I appreciate the (indiscernible) associated with having this kind of conversation in this setting and the limits there.

At least we've -- I think we've set ourselves up to have that conversation on Thursday in a, you know, in a more productive manner than we can right now.

Okay. Anything else, starting with the defense?

Anything else that we should be talking about today while we're all together?

MR. CARMAN: So, Your Honor, would you be expecting my CIPA 5 notice of intent to use the CIPA Section 5 material on Wednesday?

I think I can probably do that with the CISO, but not, you know, not 100 percent sure, but it sounds like I can -- I can probably put something together while I'm over there, you know, a very basic submission, just giving evidence of the defense's intent to use the material.

Obviously not going to be an elaborate motion of any kind.

THE COURT: Yeah, that sounds right to me.

I think Mr. Haggans put his finger on the key distinction between the -- either the Section 5 process in this case and some other hypothetical cases. It's not like, we don't think, although you'll correct us on Thursday if we're wrong, it's not like we're going to be hearing about new evidence for the first time that nobody's seen on the Government's side, and so, you know, maybe that makes your (indiscernible) a little bit easier.

But at a minimum, Mr. Carman, if you would just be in a position to tell us what your intent is, even if the (indiscernible) you're ultimately (indiscernible) has not been understandably completed by that point, that will I think help us map out next steps.

And again, the government should anticipate, you know -- think expansively about what the defense may be asking for and speculate a potential response accordingly.

All right. Mr. Haggans, anything else from government's side?

MR. HAGGANS: Two -- just two matters, Your Honor.

One, I take it for now, the conference previously set for

Friday remains set on Friday?

THE COURT: You know, I -- when I schedule pretrial conferences I'm, you know, usually anticipating that we'll be, you know, definitively resolving or maybe having

oral argument on -- or both, motions in limine, you know, resolving other issues about the manner in which the trial, logistically speaking, will actually unfold, and I think that's probably premature at this point.

And so my inclination would be to do the Thursday conference in lieu of, rather than in addition to Friday pretrial conference. But if, Mr. Haggans, you or Mr. Carman think otherwise, I would be interested to hear why.

MR. HAGGANS: I suppose, Your Honor, following the sort of bird in the hand being worth two in the bush principle, considering we're going to see each other on Thursday and have a more robust and collective view as to the path forward, the government's recommendation would be to keep the Friday appearance on the calendar, as it would be very difficult to put it back on once everybody's time is released.

THE COURT: Yeah. Okay. That's fine with me.

MR. HAGGANS: And if the Court has a different view after Thursday's proceedings, then we can address it then.

THE COURT: Exactly.

THE COURT: I think --

MR. CARMAN: The only --

THE COURT: -- if Thursday is productive, it's unlikely that we would also do Friday, but -- yeah, Mr.

Carman?

MR. CARMAN: I was just going to throw into the mix, Your Honor, we're considering whether to respond to the government's motions in limine, and I think your rules give me until Monday the 22nd to file in writing. I don't think a scheduling order superceded that, so I don't --

THE COURT: Right. No, I agree with that.

MR. CARMAN: -- I don't (indiscernible) being able to deal with that by the 19th.

THE COURT: Yeah. I mean, look let's, as Mr. Haggans says, like anything could happen between now and Thursday, inclusive.

I suppose it's possible that the matters we're talking about on Thursday are so convoluted and complicated that we just need Friday for a continuation of Thursday's proceeding, and so I don't see much downside in just keeping that on the calendar now, just to, you know, try to preserve everybody's availability.

But I do think the overwhelming likelihood is that on Thursday we'll release that Friday time slot. But yeah, for the moment, let's keep everything on the calendar.

MR. HAGGANS: Understood, Your Honor. It's Matt Haggans again.

The other item as part of the Court's order last

Thursday evening, the Court directed the government to review

both its ex parte filings and the forthcoming -- to us, via

the CISO, copy of the Court's classified memorandum accompanying its order for what I would refer to as a declassification review.

The government would request a briefing calendar so that we can move the Court to reconsider those aspects of its order under the text of the CIPA Section 4 statute.

THE COURT: All right. Say what sections you're asking for reconsideration on.

MR. HAGGANS: Towards the end of the Court's order,

Your Honor, the Court directed the government to review its
- the Government's ex parte filings in this matter to

generate redacted portions.

THE COURT: At?

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MR. HAGGANS: This is at Pages 13 and 14.

THE COURT: Yeah. Yeah.

Well, I saw -- I did see in a bunch of Eastern

District, specifically opinions on similar subject matter the judges said, look, I'm not going to direct that a redacted version be filed, because that version would be redacted so thoroughly that nothing useful would appear at the basis for reconsideration. They'd look to -- there would just be nothing left.

MR. HAGGANS: In sum and substance, that's correct, Your Honor, but we -- but we are --

THE COURT: Yeah. I (indiscernible) --

MR. HAGGANS: -- happy to brief the issue.

THE COURT: Now, and I mean -- yes, you can -- you can submit a fairly short letter brief. I think the reasoning does suggest itself at some level.

You know, my interest is just in -- in making this public and see as much of what's happening here as the statute and (indiscernible) security imperatives therein allow, and you know -- and so at a minimum, the docket should reflect at least that there was a filing on a given date, maybe on a given subject.

But, you know, just think about -- think about that from my perspective. That like if the issue we're solving for is, you know, what is the most that we can tell the public or make apparent to the public about what happened on a given date, even if it's just you know, one sentence at an utterly high level generality, you know, that will help.

I understand that it could be a very time consuming and ultimately futile exercise for the government to go through these briefs and redact everything that CIPA would require.

MR. HAGGANS: So, Your Honor, I would just note for the Court's attention, it is our practice in any case involving CIPA filings, and it's the practice we've followed in this case, that we do docket a public notice that --

THE COURT: Right.

MR. HAGGANS: -- something under the statute has been filed, we typically do that by filing a very brief letter for purposes of the record and attaching what is sometimes referred to as the half sheet or the cover sheet, which is the top page of whatever substantive filing is provided, stripped of any real classification markings or otherwise sensitive information.

We have done that in this case, and I think Your

Honor is -- has accurately devined that the sum and

substance of our motion for reconsideration as it were,

would be that we are at the perimeter of what CIPA requires

us to ensure is placed on the public record.

THE COURT: Yeah. But I'm framing the question a little bit differently, which is not what is the limit of what CIPA requires, but also what is the limit of what you can do.

You know, I mean, I have to go back and look at each of these cover letters individually, but I'm asking a question about whether they say as much as they can say, not as much as CIPA requires, but as much as they can say without implicating national security concerns or otherwise contravening any CIPA imperatives such that, you know, a court watcher could say, okay, I understand at least like what stage the case was at when that filing got made, and I

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        understand, you know, generally speaking what kind of filing
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        this is, even if I don't know anything about the specifics
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        being argued.
                  But you know, you can put in a short letter on
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        this. I think you understand where I'm coming from, and I
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        have suggested that I am (indiscernible) where it is you're
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        coming from, and we can take that -- we can take those next
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        steps at that time.
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                  MR. HAGGANS: Understood, Your Honor. Does the
        Court want to give us a date for that filing? The order is
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        -- has --
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                  THE COURT: Sorry, go ahead.
                  MR. HAGGANS: I'm sorry, Your Honor. I was just
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        noting the order directs us to complete those steps, I
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        believe within 14 days.
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                  THE COURT: Yeah. I mean, that's -- how about
        Monday for the consideration letter?
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                  MR. HAGGANS: Understood. Thank you, Your Honor.
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                  THE COURT: Okay. All right. Mr. Carman,
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        anything else from the defense side?
                  MR. CARMAN: No, Your Honor.
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                  THE COURT: All right. Thank you, everybody.
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MR. HAGGANS: Thank you, Your Honor. Have a good afternoon.

will reconvene on Thursday afternoon.

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THE COURT: And with that, we're adjourned. MR. CARMAN: Thank you. (Proceedings concluded) I, CHRISTINE FIORE, court-approved transcriber and certified electronic reporter and transcriber, certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript from the official electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the aboveentitled matter. Christine Fiere August 16, 2022 Christine Fiore, CERT Transcriber